AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-3   (Cancelled)

4.   (Currently Amended) An ICS <u>comprised of at least eight card slots</u> comprising:

an Ethernet backplane;

at least one internal ICS chassis occupant operatively coupled to said backplane; ~~and~~

wherein said at least one internal chassis occupant is configured to assign IP addresses<u>, receive a request for an IP address from a component, determine whether said request was received from one of said at least one internal chassis occupant, and assign an IP address to at least one internal chassis occupant if said request was received from one of said at least one internal chassis occupant; and</u>

<u>wherein one card slot of the said eight card slots is dedicated to a System Switch Processor card, wherein one card slot of the said eight card slots is dedicated to a System Alarm Processor card, and wherein the remaining six card slots of the said eight card slots may interchangeably house various cards selected by a user.</u>

Claims 5-7   (Cancelled)

8.   (Currently Amended) The ICS of Claim ~~7~~ <u>4</u>, wherein said cards selected by the user are multiservice route processor cards.

9.   (Currently Amended) The ICS of Claim ~~7~~ <u>4</u>, wherein said cards selected by the user are system processing engine cards.

Claims 10-17   (Cancelled)